

1     **ABSTRACT**

2             A system includes multiple server modules forming a server farm. Each server  
3     module includes one or more application caches which store availability information that  
4     indicates whether a corresponding application is available or unavailable. When a user  
5     makes a request for an application, the appropriate server module accesses its application  
6     cache to determine whether the application is available; if not, the server farm quickly  
7     notifies the user of the unavailability of the application. Further, synchronization  
8     strategies are described for distributing availability information among the server  
9     modules in the system, and for updating a server module that has recently become active  
10    with current availability information stored by other reference server modules.